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Key Definitions

*Institutional Effectiveness*
Institutional effectiveness is an ongoing, systematic, integrated, institution-wide, research-based planning process aimed at helping the College achieve its mission and goals, and in assisting in continuous improvement for the College’s operations.

*Strategic Planning*
The strategic planning process establishes the essential major directions for the College and creates the framework within which other planning can occur.

*Functional-area Planning (Executive Cabinet Level)*
The functional-area planning process allows for the development of objectives at the campus president, vice chancellor, and chancellor levels to provide additional guidance toward the achievement of the College's mission and goals.

*Operational Planning (Department Level)*
The operational planning process allows for the development of objectives and action plans to achieve the College's mission and goals through the development of institutional effectiveness plans (IE Plans) by College planning units.

*Evaluation*
Evaluation is a term used to define the systematic collection, analysis, and use of results achieved through the implementation of institutional effectiveness plans for the purpose of improving effectiveness and student learning.
Goals
Goals are the intended results, expressed in general terms, which must be accomplished to fulfill the mission of the College.

Objectives
Objectives are milestones or results-oriented statements expressed in precise terms that must be accomplished to achieve the goals of the College. They should be specific, measurable, and realistic, with a defined time period for achievement.

Action Plan
The identified set of actions or activities to achieve the objectives and goals of the College. They should be specific, measurable, and realistic, with a defined time period for achievement.

Planning Unit
Planning unit refers to a functional unit (an autonomous, organizationally defined department, office, or program) with specific responsibilities that uniquely contribute to the mission of the College.

Critical Success Factors
Critical success factors measure actual performance to the College's mission, goals, strategies, and objectives.

Indicators of Effectiveness
Indicators of effectiveness are quantitative and qualitative measures used to monitor the College's performance in each of the critical success factors.

Data Sources
Sources used by the College to collect data. Examples include College databases, office files, and surveys.
Commitment to Institutional Effectiveness
The Junior College District of Kansas City, Missouri, doing business as Metropolitan Community College (MCC), is a comprehensive, two-year community college system with five campus locations and a district administrative center. MCC is committed to an effective planning and evaluation process in order to fulfill its mission. The planning process at MCC includes strategic planning, functional-area planning, unit operational planning, and evaluation and assessment. While strategic planning focuses on the long-term future of the institution, functional-area and unit operational planning provides the details for translating the College's goals into objectives and action plans for short-range planning. Evaluation and assessment of these objectives and action plans allow for the continuous review and improvement of educational programs, student services, community relations, and institutional management. The overall goal is to link policy and decisions to the College's purpose, mission, and values.

This document has been developed to provide information and guidance for the planning and institutional effectiveness systems at MCC. For clarification purposes, the terms "College" and "MCC" will be used interchangeably to refer to the Junior College District of Kansas City, Missouri. Additional key terminology is defined within the section entitled, Key Definitions.

The Strategic Planning Process
The College utilizes the strategic planning process to develop a long-term direction and focus for the institution. As a result, this process serves as the framework for continuous planning and improvement at MCC. The current strategic plan – MCC Strategic Plan 2017-2021 - was adopted by the Board of Trustees in September 2017. The plan is set to expire on January 1, 2021. At the heart of the strategic plan is the commitment to student and community success as captured by the mission of the District: “Preparing students, serving communities, creating opportunities.”

In January 2018, MCC revamped and revitalized its institutional effectiveness process to improve and enhance the process by rebuilding a new infrastructure aimed at monitoring institutional operational performance in relation to its strategic plan.
Functional-Area Planning
The institutional effectiveness process serves as the framework for continuous planning at MCC. Functional-area planning allows for expanded dialogue and discussion among key operational components of the institution. This form of planning results in the development of objectives derived from the institutional goals as identified in the four-year Strategic Plan. These objectives serve as key priorities to be addressed within the next year. This form of planning provides additional guidance to ensure that MCC’s mission is fulfilled.

Functional-area planning occurs within the ten Chancellor’s Executive Cabinet (EC) areas. The EC areas are subdivided into 110 planning units (unit/functional areas) across the District. Functional/unit area planning utilizes the development of Institutional Effectiveness Plans (IE Plans) to translate the College’s mission into goals, objectives, and action plans for short-range planning. The short-range planning is guided by the District’s strategic plan, which focuses on long-range planning of the institution.

The Operational Planning Process
Functional-area planning allows MCC to identify the intended purpose, direction, and expected outcomes of the College. The operational planning process provides a method for focused review of educational, administrative, and support programs and services based on the College’s goals, objectives, and expected outcomes. Operational planning at MCC is accomplished through the development of IE Plans, developed by each planning unit, to address the effectiveness of programs and services.

Each of these plans is developed on an annual basis and includes a review of the previous year’s activities and results. Linked to the College’s Strategic Plan, they allow for broad-based involvement and participation by faculty and staff. This manual will primarily address the IE Plan process.
IE Plan Fundamentals

To enhance collaboration, communication, and interaction among the entire District’s planning units, the following guidelines should be followed:

A. Each IE Plan should have a minimum of three Goals. Each goal should have a least one corresponding outcome/objective; each outcome/objective should have a corresponding measure, target, and finding. Each finding should have supporting documentation. An Action Plan must be developed for each objective, whether the objective was met or not. The findings should contain the planned use of the findings/results as well as lessons learned.

B. Where applicable, each outcome/objective should be associated with the Chancellor’s Goals (Institutional Priorities), the Strategic Plan and the relevant HLC Accreditation Criterion. All these associations are embedded in the WEAVE platform.

C. Planning Unit Managers (PUMs), when applicable, should incorporate at least one goal identified by their supervisors that relates to their operations, as well as those goals identified by their Executive Cabinet member.

D. PUMs are responsible for ensuring that the staff they oversee participate in the operational planning process before the IE Plan is developed and entered into WEAVE. Participation by all employees is important because institutional improvements are directly related to the actions of all the District’s planning units, which consist of a variety of staff involved in daily activities. Inclusion and participation in the process increases knowledge and understanding, and empowers employees to assist in fulfilling not only the unit's performance, but MCC's mission and purpose.
In summary, an IE Plan should include:

- The Planning Unit mission statement (purpose);
- A minimum of three planning unit goals;
- Corresponding objectives that align with the specified goals;
- Appropriate MCC Strategic Plan theme, HLC criteria, Chancellor’s Goals (Institutional Priorities) that are addressed in each objective;
- Appropriate Measures (methodology employed to achieve the objective, i.e. evaluation criteria);
- Target values (expected results/outcomes);
- Findings and results with an in-depth analysis of the results;
- An Action Plan for each objective indicating planned use of the results.
Guidelines for Preparing Plans

MCC is committed to an ongoing planning evaluation-improvement cycle that systematically and continuously examines the College's educational and administrative programs and services. The process for accomplishing this includes the annual development of IE Plans by College planning units. A description and set of guidelines are listed below to assist with the development and completion of the appropriate forms. Although plans are developed on an annual basis, it is important to note that the institutional effectiveness process is continuous and unending. The completion of one cycle of the institutional effectiveness process leads directly to initiation and potential for improvement of the next year's cycle.

Planning Units

In order to establish and maintain a comprehensive approach, the institutional effectiveness process involves the active participation of each and every individual planning unit of the College. All units of the College's organizational structure participate because each unit exists and functions in direct support of the College's mission and purpose. These planning units are reviewed annually, and when appropriate, modified to reflect the creation, expansion, integration, or elimination of offices, departments, divisions, and programs.

Each identified College planning unit is required to complete an IE Plan. Each planning unit's manager/supervisor is responsible for ensuring that all staff members of the unit participate in the planning process. For example, planning sessions can be conducted to discuss and solicit input into the development of the unit's institutional effectiveness plan. In addition, district-level planning units should review and, when applicable, incorporate the objectives identified by the respective functional areas with which they are associated as well as those objectives identified by the campus on which they are located.
General Guidelines for IE Plans

One of the key elements of institutional effectiveness is its focus on the development of objectives and strategies to improve the performance of the College's programs and planning units. Each planning unit prepares institutional effectiveness plans that are evaluated on an annual basis. These performance results are used to improve the program or unit's performance. The following should be considered when completing these plans:

- Recognize that it is not necessary for any planning unit to describe every detail of the operation of that unit. The unit should identify key objectives and outcomes it will focus on for the coming year and concentrate on evaluating and assessing those objectives and outcomes. This requires that outcomes and objectives be prioritized. For example, a planning unit may choose to focus on new initiatives, select only those objectives vital to the unit operations, identify an area of deficiency within the unit that requires attention or improvement, and/or identify and build on an area of strength within the unit. The unit may also choose a combination of these approaches. The key is to directly link unit objectives and outcomes to the College's institutional goals and priorities. The minimum and recommended number of goals for each unit is three.

- Develop simple objective statements and strategies. Avoid complex, combined sentences. Make sure the objectives are measurable in a meaningful way. Be realistic.

- Maintain an inclusive and participatory process. Each planning unit should solicit staff input in the development of the unit's IE Plan.

- Periodic review will need to occur to achieve optimal results. Monitoring progress of unit objectives, strategies, and outcomes gives units the opportunity to act as assessment results are analyzed, instead of waiting until the end of the year to make any changes or modifications. The unit and, ultimately, the institution can benefit from early corrective action, expansion or maintenance of stated objectives, strategies, and outcomes.
Institutional Effectiveness Plans (IE Plans)

Each plan contains the following elements:

a. *Mission Statement (Statement of Purpose).* This statement describes, in general terms, the purpose of the department or program within the College organization and the focus or perimeters of its efforts. For example:

   The Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Compliance coordinates the development and implementation of a District-wide systematic, comprehensive and integrated planning/evaluation process to ensure that the College's mission is fulfilled.

b. *Unit Objective #.* List objectives based on priority order from highest to lowest. List all objectives, regardless of budget impact.

c. *MCC Strategic Plan Themes Addressed.* All College planning units should review and incorporate the themes identified within the College's Strategic Plan, which is available in WEAVE Online.

d. *Outcome/Objective.* Each College planning unit should develop objectives derived from the College's institutional goals, which may include those objectives identified at the functional-area planning level. District-level departments/offices also should review and, when applicable, incorporate the objectives identified by the campus on which they are located. They should be specific, measurable, and realistic, with a defined time period for achievement.

e. *Measure (Evaluation criteria).* Identify how stated objectives will be evaluated and assessed during the planning cycle. Two examples follow:

   - Students will periodically be surveyed to determine whether they have used the campus transfer support service (and if not, why not) and how they perceive the information and assistance provided by that service.
   - Nursing program completion rates for entrants and reasons for non-completion will be collected.
f. **Target.** Define the results expected from the stated objective. A metric has to be identified for each target. Two examples:

- The campus transfer support service will be used by x% of the students and will result in at least a y% transfer rate among students using this service.
- Over the next four years, the percent of students admitted to the nursing program will be increased by x%, and the percent of entrants who successfully complete the nursing program will increase by y%.

g. **Findings: Analysis of Evaluation Results.** Report and show documentary evidence of the actual results of evaluation and assessment activities. (This section should be used to document periodic reviews, and submitted in complete form at the end of the year.)

h. **Action Plan: Planned Use of Evaluation Results.** State how evaluation and assessment results will be used: to identify and correct weaknesses or deficiencies in the assessment method; clarify or more effectively articulate an objective statement; or demonstrate a need to implement new or alternative methods for achieving an objective or for improving performance. Two examples follow:

- If the campus transfer support service is used by less than x% of the students, the service should be promoted more effectively through presentations to student groups and distribution of materials to all students. If aspects of the service are criticized, explicit plans for improvement should be implemented.
  
  - Over the next year, XYZ strategies will be implemented to increase the number of students admitted to the nursing program.
  - If entry or completion rates are lower than expected, an analysis will be conducted on non-entrants and non-completers to identify areas where student advisement or the curriculum might be improved.
  - Develop a campus support service to assist students interested in transferring to local and out-of-state universities by the end of this fiscal year.
Nursing program completion rates for entrants and reasons for non-completion will be collected.